Reviewer's report

Title: Rapid and Simultaneous Detection of Human Hepatitis B Virus and Hepatitis C Virus Antibodies Based on a Protein Chip Assay Using Nano-gold Immunological Amplification and Silver Staining Method

Version: 3 Date: 31 March 2005

Reviewer: Maria Martell

Reviewer's report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

In their revised manuscript Duan et al. have clarified to a great extent the methods and results sections taking account of the referees' comments. I am now convinced that the objective of the present work is a non quantitative visual detection of HBV and HCV antibodies and therefore, neither coefficient of variation nor dynamic ranges are applicable for the moment. However, although the model arrays shown in figure 5 to evaluate de detection limit clearly discriminate between negative and detection spots (array d), the protein chips for serum sample detection (figure 6) show, at least visually, background spots intensity equal to the 3 ng/mL detection limit, in this cases considered as negative results.

The authors should, in the absence of quantitative data, review their conclusions on the detection limit of the proposed assay.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests